

## PROGRAM POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR COMMERCIAL DRIVER TRAINING SCHOOLS

### Instructor Certification Requirements

#### **Initial Certification for an Instructor's License**

*Reference RCW 46.82.320; 46.82.330*

Instructor candidates must meet all state laws and program requirements including the following:

- An Instructor Application that documents the instructor's fitness, character, training, and experience as an instructor.
- Proof of completion of sixty (60) clock-hours of instructor training, which includes twelve (12) hours of behind-the-wheel and six (6) hours of supervised practice instruction.
- A five-year Abstract of Driving Record, issued in the past 30 days having: not more than 3 moving violations in the past 12 months or more than 4 in the past 24 months; no alcohol-related traffic violation and no license denial, suspension, revocation or cancellation, in the past three years.
- Qualification on the Department of Licensing (DOL) driver knowledge and driving skills exams.
- Payment of a \$75.00 application fee.\*
- Completion of a Washington State Patrol criminal background and fingerprint check. (The license applicant pays for the cost of this check.)

Upon receipt of a complete and acceptable application and criminal background check, the Department will:

- Send the applicant a Commercial Driving School Instructor's License that is valid for one year.

**\*Note:** The \$75.00 application fee is valid for three tests. The fee is forfeit following three knowledge tests or any combination of three attempts to pass the knowledge and drive test. A qualifying knowledge test result will be honored for up to 90 days.

#### **Renewal Certification for an Instructor's License**

*Reference RCW 46.82.320*

DOL mails a renewal application to the instructor 60 days prior to the expiration of an instructor's license.

Within 60 days the instructor should:

- Return the application with a \$25.00 license renewal fee.
- Provide a copy of a five-year Abstract of Driving Record issued in the past 30 days, or written permission to the Department to review the complete driving record.
- Once every five years take and pass the DOL knowledge and driving skill exams.

Upon receipt of the renewal fee and, when required, the criminal background check and the exam results, DOL will mail a new instructor's license that is valid for one-year.

**Note:** Instructors are required by law to notify the department in writing within 30 days of any change in or termination of employment. The name and address of the new driving school(s) is required.

## **Driving School Certification Requirements**

### **Initial Certification for a Commercial Driving School License**

*Reference RCW 46.82.310; 46.82.360*

Applicants for a driver training school license must satisfy business ownership, facility and vehicle requirements of state law and the Department's program criteria including:

- A school license application.
- The school operator's certification of fitness and suitability of all parties having a direct or indirect interest in the school.
- The school location – which must be used exclusively for driver instruction. It cannot be a residence, house trailer, tent, temporary address or stand, etc.
- Proof of liability insurance coverage in the amounts required by state law.
- Certification that there are no civil actions pending against the school or any person or party with a direct or indirect interest in the school.
- Valid vehicle license, equipment, and signage of vehicles used for student instruction.
- Payment of \$500.00; a \$300.00 nonrefundable application fee, and upon approval, a \$200.00 license fee.

Upon receipt of a complete application and license fee the Department will:

- Schedule an inspection of the school location and instruction vehicles.
- Review the application and inspection report, and if qualified issue the school a one year school license.

### **Renewal Certification for a Commercial Driving School License**

*Reference RCW 46.82.310; 46.82.360*

DOL mails a renewal application to the school owner/operator 60 days prior to the expiration of the school's license.

Within 60 days the owner/operator:

- Should return the renewal application and the \$250.00 license renewal fee.

The Department will contact the owner/operator and schedule a compliance inspection to include:

- Review of the school's records of classes and student instruction.
- Inspection of all vehicles used for driving instruction.
- Verification of liability insurance coverage, business practices, and display of the course curriculum.
- Display of the school's license and all instructors' licenses.

Upon receipt of the renewal application and fee, and a satisfactory compliance inspection report, the Department will issue the school a one year license renewal.

### **Changes in School Location**

A change in school or classroom location will require an inspection before classes may be offered at the new location. Owners should submit an application to initiate an inspection and approval of all school locations.

### **Changes in School Ownership, Officers, and/or Directors**

A new application must be submitted within 30 days following any transfer of ownership, or change in the officers or directors of a commercial driving school.

A transfer of ownership will require an inspection. Operation of the school under the previous license is allowed for a maximum of 60 days from the date of transfer pending inspection and final approval of the new application.

# Driver Training Curriculum

## Driver Training Course Curriculum for Display to the Public

Reference RCW 46.82.360

The Driving Instructor's Advisory Committee has approved the *Instructor's Curriculum Requirements* for commercial driving schools. State law requires that a copy of this curriculum be on display at each school and branch classroom for viewing by school clients. DOL provides a copy of the curriculum requirements to all schools and instructors.

The *Instructor's Curriculum Requirements* contains a detailed overview of each classroom and laboratory session. It lists the learning and practical performances that are required for issuance of a traffic safety education course completion certificate.

At a minimum, schools and instructors are required to teach to the scope and content of the curriculum requirements. However, a school or instructor may alter the sequence and organization of the learning performances so long as the quality of student instruction and learning is maintained.

Instructors are required to show their compliance with the curriculum requirements on each student's learning record. At a minimum this record must show the:

- Date of instruction.
- Type of instruction.
- Number of hours of instruction.

Compliance with this standard is evaluated during DOL's periodic reviews of the driving school's records.

## DOL Curriculum Summary

As an aid to students and parents the Department is having its staff give each instruction permit applicant a *Curriculum Summary* sheet.

The *Curriculum Summary* is an outline of the elements of the classroom and behind-the-wheel driving instruction that is fully documented in the *Instructor's Curriculum Requirements*.

Students enrolling in a commercial driver training school and their parents are being encouraged to use this summary sheet as an aid in following the growth of a student's learning and driving experience.

## Class Duration and Structure

DOL policy requires that driver training courses and daily classes satisfy the following standards for their duration, structure and student learning.

- Minimum five (5) week course duration.
- Required hours of instruction:
  - Minimum of thirty (30) hours of classroom instruction including four (4) hours behind-the-wheel.\*
  - Minimum of one (1) hour of driver observation, four (4) hours are recommended.
- Minimum two (2) hours of instruction per week (exceptions \*\* made for weeks that include a holiday).
- Daily teaching session duration:
  - No restriction on the hour at which classes begin or end.
  - Maximum total of four (4) hours classroom, behind-the-wheel and observation daily.
  - Maximum two (2) hour classroom session - (minimum 110 minutes of class time, maximum ten (10) minutes break time).
- Behind-the-wheel instruction to run concurrent/complementary to classroom instruction and student learning.
- Student must possess an Instruction Permit before any behind-the-wheel instruction (not required for driver observation).
- Maximum time to complete course twenty-six (26) weeks, no exceptions.

### \* Behind-the-wheel instruction alternates

- Three (3) hours behind-the-wheel and four (4) hours simulator, or;
- Three (3) hours behind-the-wheel and two (2) hours range instruction.

**\*\*Exceptions:** document holidays, any class or vehicle sessions a student misses, the date of the makeup session, and/or any transfer to a different class.

### **Branch Classroom Requirements**

After establishing its primary place of business, a commercial driving school may make application to establish branch classrooms. To qualify as a branch classroom the facility:

- Must be within 35 miles of the place of business;
- Cannot be a residence, domicile, rooming or apartment house, or other facility prohibited by RCW 46.82.360(6);
- Must be subject to certification and inspection by the department.

A branch classroom may be located in an appropriate space within a publicly or privately owned facility. This may include the use of rooms located in a school, meeting hall, community center, etc. Owners and instructors are encouraged to obtain a use agreement before applying for a license for the branch classroom.

### **Contracting for Driving Instruction in Public or Private Schools**

Commercial driving school owners and instructors may contract their services as follows:

- Commercial driving schools may contract with public or private schools to provide behind the wheel instruction.
- Instructors may enter into a personal service contract to provide classroom and behind the wheel instruction as an employee of a public or private school.

Under these circumstances the public or private school will issue a certificate of traffic safety education course completion that has been obtained from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Entry into such a contract may require the owner and or instructor to meet requirements that are in addition to or that exceed those in RCW 46.82.